

INFANTS AND MARRIED WOMEN.

dispense with certain proceedings at a saving of time and costs.

With regard to suits against infants the practice has hitherto been to serve them and the parties with whom they reside with copies of the bill of complaint and a notice of application for the appointment of a guardian *ad litem*. Now, the officer of the Court is directed to appoint a guardian upon *proceipe*, thus saving the time required to be given under the old practice as well as the costs of the bills, notices, serving, etc. The absurdity of serving infants with bills, etc., which they could not understand and probably not read, no longer exists.

As to married women it is no longer necessary to procure an order that they should answer separately. The Ontario Statutes having placed the property of a married woman under her own control there no longer existed the reason for an order to answer separately. This change also saves several weeks in the prosecution of the suit and lessens the costs.

The Judges have issued a circular to the Deputy Registrars directing them to appoint the same person as guardian in all cases. They have recently been making searching inquiries into the subject of infants' estates, and have discovered some very serious irregularities; and they have no doubt taken this step in order to have but one person to look to in the management of infants' affairs. We must say we think the Judges have acted wisely in the matter, although it may seem at first-sight rather a slight upon many solicitors who have acted carefully and conscientiously with respect to the matters confided to them: but the protection of infants' estates is of paramount importance, and it is better that the Judges should for a time bear the blame of what some may think an unnecessary and harsh proceeding, than that they should be derelict in the trust confided to them. They are certainly the best judges of the

necessities of the case; and if it is necessary or expedient that one solicitor should be responsible in all cases, they could not have made a better selection than Mr. John Hoskin. This gentleman has for many years past acted as solicitor for infants' estates under directions of the Court, and has, we believe, been commended by the Judges for his careful attention to his duties in that behalf.

Any person who has been in the habit from week to week of attending in Court must have felt pained with the evident neglect exhibited as to the interests of infants. We know not where the difficulty arises, but it is apparent that for some reason or other there is not usually that acquaintance with the facts in infancy cases, on the part of those who represent them, that there is on the part of Counsel for adult clients. There can be no doubt of the fact of irregularities existing in these matters; and we could, if necessary, refer to some rather startling instances. No better way suggests itself to us at present of improving on the existing state of things than by appointing one who has for years been attending to this class of business and who shall be responsible for the due care of those whom the Court is especially bound to protect, and we may add that it is of great practical importance that such person should reside where he can at any moment be called upon to give information to the judges in respect to pending proceedings. Our friends in the country are mistaken in supposing that these orders have the effect of centralizing the business in Toronto (though we have our own opinions on the subject of decentralization). All the business formerly conducted in the country will still be conducted there, and all in Toronto will of course remain there as heretofore.

If for any reason those interested in the welfare of infants desire some one else to be named as guardian it can be